

Covenant Coordinators: Crucial contributors to the Covenant of Mayors success

Report on the activities of Covenant Territorial and National Coordinators (CTCs, CNCs) 2013

Covenant Coordinators are those public administrations which provide strategic guidance, financial and technical support to municipalities signing up to the Covenant of Mayors.

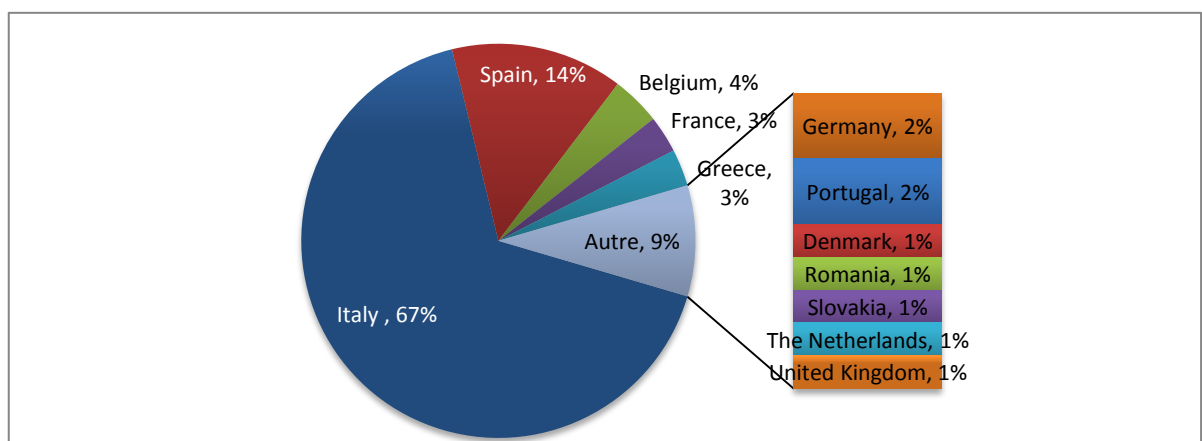
One of the commitments in the agreement signed between Covenant Coordinators and the European Commission is to “report regularly to DG ENER on the results obtained” in their geographical area. This reporting exercise was launched in autumn 2013 and targeted the 115 Covenant Coordinators which signed the Covenant of Mayors before September 2012.¹ In total, **99 responses** to the questionnaire, developed by the Covenant of Mayors Office, were received (i.e. **participation rate of 86%**).²

This report provides an overview of the activities performed by Covenant Coordinators in the framework of the contract they have signed with the European Commission.

The first section outlines the main results of the questionnaire and the second focuses on the key messages derived from the survey.

Implementation of the Covenant Coordinators’ commitments

Geographical distribution and type of structure



67% of Covenant Coordinators are located in Italy, 14% in Spain. Compared to last year, we saw a **diversification in terms of number of EU countries represented: Romania, Slovakia, Belgium, Greece, Portugal**, while there is still a steady growth in the number of

¹ As of December 2013, 139 Coordinators are participating in the Covenant.

² Covenant Coordinators having failed to report on their activities have been temporarily unpublished from the Covenant website.

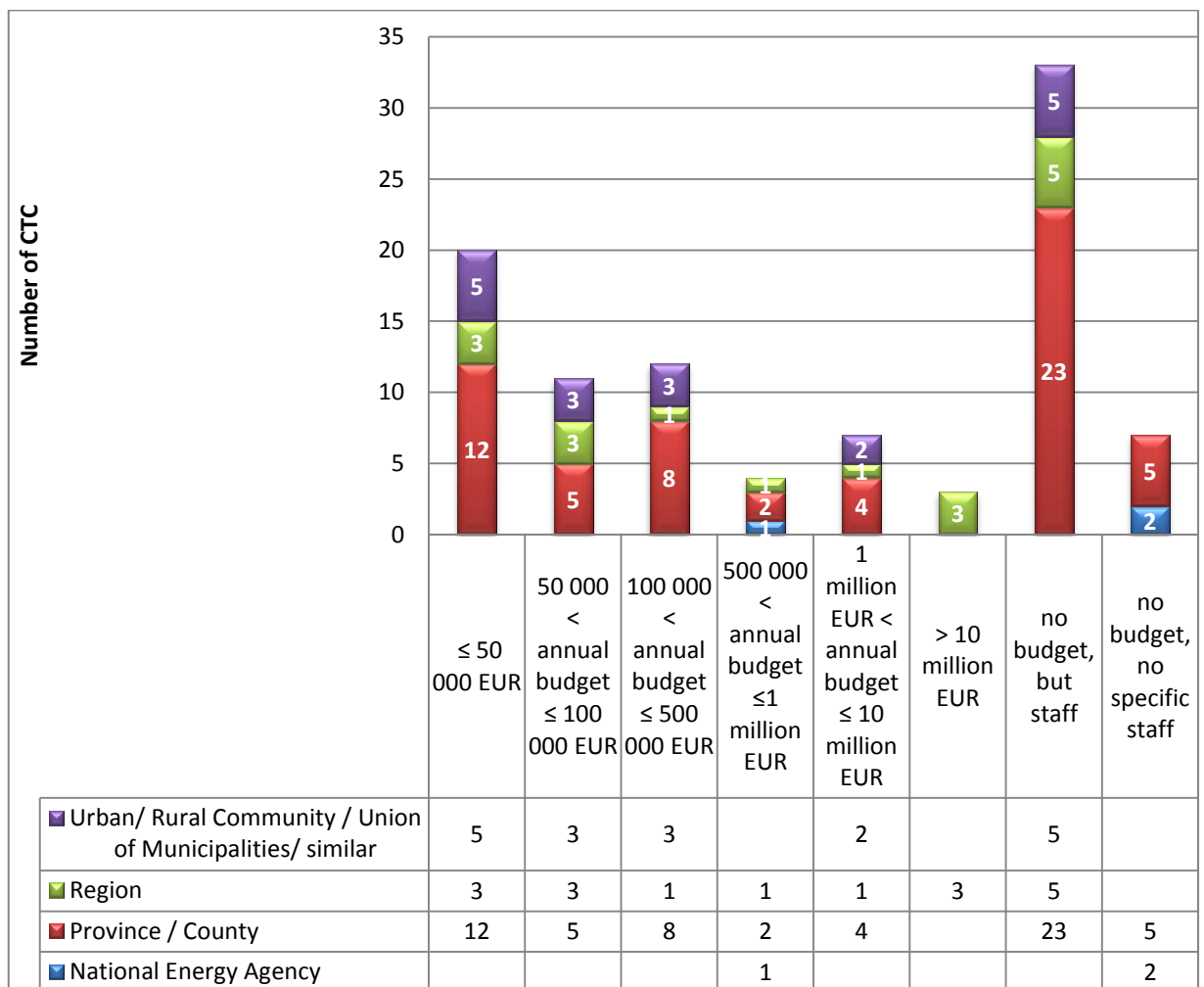
CTCs from Italy and Spain. This, of course, reflects the number of signatories from these 2 countries with around 2600 from Italy and 1500 from Spain, accounting for 75% of the total number of signatories.

As regards the types of Covenant Coordinators, it should be noted that while 61% are Provinces, the Covenant of Mayors Office has observed a **growing interest from urban and rural groupings of local authorities** which now represent almost 20% of CTCs.

Financial resources

Overall budget

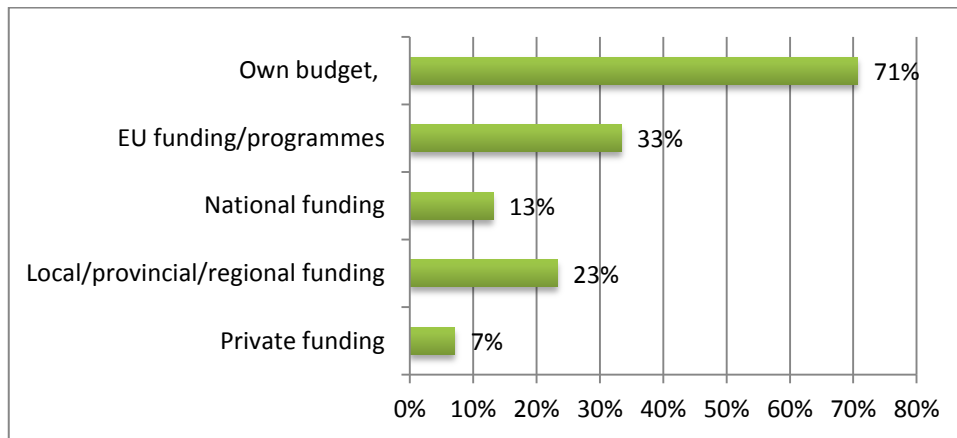
Overall budget (in Euros) allocated per year to the implementation of the Covenant of Mayors per type of Coordinator (e.g. development and implementation of sustainable energy action plans / measures, promotional activities...)



In general, resources are allocated to the implementation of the Covenant: **59% of Covenant Territorial Coordinators allocate budget, and 34% allocate staff even though** there is no budget earmarked specifically for the Covenant.

The budget allocated to Covenant-related activities, according to the respondent Coordinators, comes from various sources. Here below is some information given by the Covenant Coordinators regarding budget sources.

Budget sources



Multiple selections were allowed, so percentages may add up to more than 100%.

When budget was allocated, 71% of respondents allocated part of their own budget to the development of Covenant activities. 33% of the respondent Coordinators use EU funding while 23% rely on local/provincial/regional funding. These numbers do not reflect however that some of the “own budget” might actually come from a national allocation or that funds labelled as “regional funding” might actually come from ERDF via a call for proposals issued by the region for the provinces. In any case, what is interesting to highlight is: **most public authorities allocate funds from their own budget, and 40% use actually 2 or more sources of funding to finance their Covenant of Mayors related activities.**

Among the sources of budget listed by the CTCs, here is a non-exhaustive list of European funding sources:

- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) comes first
- But many also finance activities using the various European Territorial Cooperation programmes under ERDF
 - o Cross-border cooperation programmes (Italy-Austria, Italy–France Maritime, POCTEFEX Spain–Morocco, etc...)
 - o Transnational co-operation programmes (Alpine Space programme, Mediterranean programme, Central Baltic Programme)
 - o Interregional cooperation : INTERREG IV C
 - o Adriatic IPA Cross-border Co-operation Programme 2007-13
- Intelligent Energy Europe
 - o ELENA-EIB facility
 - o IEE call for proposals (including the MLEI – Mobilising Local Energy Investments)
- And others: EARDF, FP7, LIFE +, Isle pact (contract of services with the EC for the islands), Leonardo da Vinci (to host trainees)...

At National Level or regional level:

- Private foundation : in Italy foundation Cariplo financing the SEAP development
- Regional call for proposals to provinces or regional grants to provinces
- National programmes, call for proposals from national energy agencies on specific topics, allowance for environmental compensation (presence of nuclear / oil royalties,
 - o In Spain: SOLCASA – solar thermal installations, BIOMCASA – biomass heating, GEOTCASA – geothermal energy

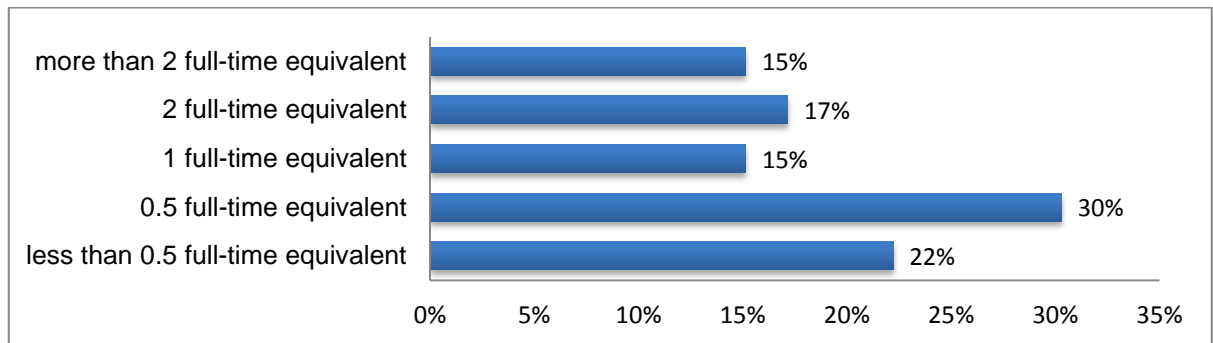
- In Italy: National Revolving fund (Fondo Kyoto)
- In Greece: Save Energy National Programme for energy efficiency in Municipalities and Demonstration projects for green rural and island communities
- In the UK: Welsh Government Grant

Aside from direct financing, there were other ways of supporting mentioned such as: economic impact assessment to see the impact of any proposed programmes and prioritise action within the cities, in the form of staff time.

Human resources

Internal team

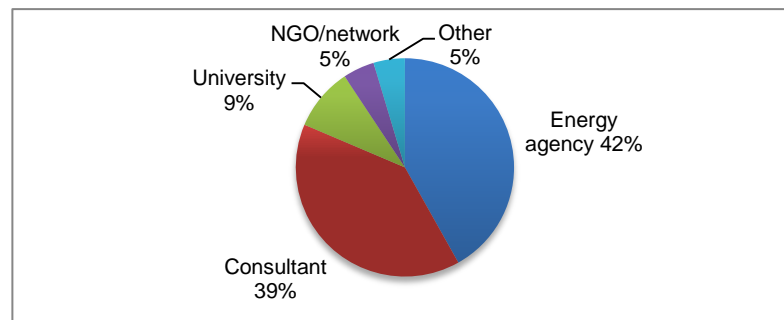
The great majority of respondent Coordinators (78%) allocate members of their internal team to Covenant of Mayors activities.



This internal team is often seconded by external staff whose expertise is sought for technical tasks.

Human resources mobilised to assist the signatories in developing their BEIs / SEAPs

In cases where **external staff** is contracted by Covenant Coordinators (60% of the cases), the below chart shows the type of organisation they come from. In some cases, for a single Covenant Coordinator, several organisations can have been contracted.



Local and Regional Energy Agencies (LAREAs) are the obvious key allies of Covenant Coordinators. 42% of Coordinators rely on an energy agency for the Covenant implementation. Private Consultants are also very much mobilized with 39% of Coordinators using their services in the framework of the Covenant. Universities only make up 9% of the total although their potential for support is considerable.

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Multi-level governance and cooperation with other stakeholders

The table below provides an idea of the multi-level governance dimension of the Covenant of Mayors, as it shows the **numerous interactions** between respondent Coordinators and other sub-national public authorities or stakeholders regarding the implementation of the Covenant in their territory.

Number of CTCs having had interactions with other stakeholders

Covenant Territorial Coordinator interacts with:	National ministries	National energy agency	Region	Province	Union association of municipalities	LAREA	Scientific community	Citizens	Private sector	Chamber of commerce, professional associations	Energy utility
National Energy Agency	1		2	1	1	1				1	
Province / County	7	4	22	16	28	28	23	16	17	15	4
Region	5	3	2	9	9	8	9	5	7	4	3
Urban/ Rural Community / Union of Municipalities	2	2	5	9	7	6	8	8	7	5	3
Total	15	9	31	35	45	43	40	29	31	25	10

To go further, here is a non-exhaustive list of the kind of actions carried out in the framework of this cooperation between CTCs and other stakeholders.

Cooperation with other public administrations in the same country

Some of these interactions are formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding signed by both parties. It can be a contract drawn between a province and a region to support their municipalities in drafting SEAPs, but also between two provinces or between more actors of the same territory (province, regional energy agency, union of municipalities, university; or the region with all its provinces and energy agencies...)

There are also examples with no formal agreement between parties but just a regional steering committee/working group involving various local stakeholders; or an informal exchange where a province uses the materials developed by another province which is a bit more advanced in the process.

The aim is to coordinate activities: administrative interface, technical support, monitoring and promotion of the implemented activities.

Cooperation with other public administrations in another country

The respondents also mentioned this type of cooperation in the framework of an EU-financed project. In this case, they are often exchanging experiences about their role as CTCs or CNCs.

A special such action to highlight is the national meeting of Covenant Territorial Coordinators organised in Pescara by the Abruzzo Region. The main goal was to gather the Italian CTCs and CS but also to invite other European CTCs to foster an exchange of best practices.

Cooperation with the National ministries

Italian CTCs gathered in Rome in July 2013 at the initiative of the Ministry of the Environment to discuss the EU 2014-2020 programming period. The outcome is that the experiences and needs of municipalities, CTC and CS, in the framework of the Covenant of Mayors are taken into account at the national level to better define the objectives for the 2014-2020 period.

The same happened in Greece where the CNC gave some technical consulting to the Ministry of Development, Competitiveness, Infrastructure, Transport and Networks, and the Ministry of Environment, Planning and Public Works on the design of the New Programming Period 2014-2020 for the transition to a low carbon economy.

This is one of the added values of the CNC together with, as reported below, the development of financing programmes.

Moreover many provinces and regions discussed priority actions at the regional level within the 2014-2020 programmes that would better suit the needs of the territory to achieve Covenant objectives, using SEAPs to better identify the priority areas needing funding.

Covenant National Coordinators: National Energy Agency

The role of national coordinators, especially national energy agencies, can be extremely important - especially when they are managing funding programmes. Here are some activities undertaken by Covenant National coordinators:

- Designing and operating national programmes for sustainable energy actions in municipalities
- Developing collaborations between national and regional level for regional Sustainable Energy Action Plans

- Developing pilot actions and establishing cooperation with various market actors to financing municipal Sustainable Energy through alternative funding sources (private funds, EPC, innovative combined financing schemes...)
- In cooperation with the Union of Municipalities, propose to the national government to set up an Observatory of the country's municipalities' consumptions, and assist in developing strategies and funds for energy efficiency investments.
- Set-up a National Working Group (in some cases called "Covenant Club") of Coordinators and Supporters (and municipalities) to engage existing, new and potential Supporting Structures. The aim is to better coordinate actions and gather feedback from the ground to better define the support to be provided.
- In some cases, it can go as far as establishing a fund for local and regional authorities aimed at promoting investments for municipal projects (in Greece for ex.).
- For other national coordinators not able to provide any direct funding to local authorities, they can assist signatories in accessing funding sources or organise workshops/working groups to review available financing sources, alternative forms of financing, potential borrowing options, as well as looking at the types of models and schemes which would provide good returns on investment and allow repayment of borrowing.

Universities and in general the **scientific community** are also more and more involved, either in the technical support for SEAP development, but also more specifically in developing tools for data collection, building audits, data mapping through a GIS system...

Now that there is an increased lack of budget to finance SEAP related measures, following a more technical part, we see the involvement of more actors, especially those helpful for finding project financing opportunities: **chambers of commerce, professional associations, trade associations....**

Chambers of commerce were often mentioned in their capacity of facilitating exchanges between the public and private sectors to find new ways of funding SEAP measures. Chambers of commerce were also mentioned in a cooperation whose aim is to develop a certification scheme for energy services/efficiency companies (ESCOs).

The private sector is more and more present as there are market shares/opportunities to seize in implementing SEAP measures.

When involved, **Energy utilities and suppliers** provide municipalities with data for their Baseline Emissions Inventory (BEI).

Environmental NGOs- or Associations have a role in spreading messages, reaching out to citizens and, in some cases, they also provide scientific advice.

Other stakeholders mentioned were consumers associations, association of volunteers, schools, consumer cooperatives...

Overall coordination and administrative interface with the Covenant of Mayors Office Support to signatories

Coordinators play a crucial role in interfacing between the Covenant of Mayors Office and Signatories regarding administrative matters such as the adherence, SEAP submission, etc.

47% of respondent Covenant Coordinators complete their signatories' profiles. The closer a coordinator is to the ground, the more likely it is to manage signatories' profiles.

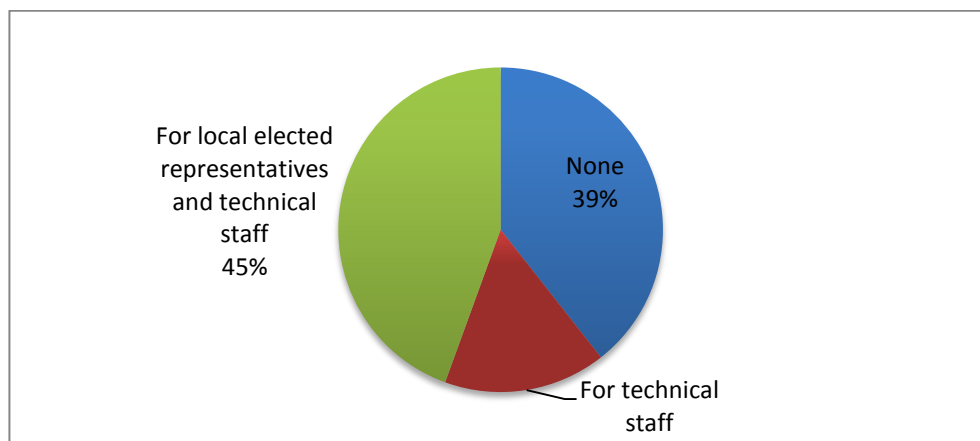
The percentage which completes their signatories' profiles is respectively: 63% of the urban/rural community, 53% of provinces, 18% of regions and 0% of national energy agencies.

In the case where the Coordinator manages the online profiles of its associated signatories, the types of online submission tasks performed by the Coordinator are listed below:

Administrative information (Contact details...)	38	81%
Technical information (SEAP template)	41	87%
Promotional information (Benchmarks of Excellence, Energy Days)	30	64%

Multiple selection was allowed, so percentages may add up to more than 100%.

To support signatories in their commitments, 61% of Coordinators organise working groups to build local capacities and foster exchanges of experience, for:



As seen earlier, these working groups gather several levels of public administration but also external stakeholders such as LAREAS, universities, chamber of commerce, etc.

The working groups can be within the Coordinator's organization: between the political levels, the directors and the technicians, assisted or not by the external staff (LAREA/consultant/university). They also sometimes include the communication team and other stakeholders mentioned in the previous sections.

Baseline Emission Inventory (BEI) and Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP)

Tools, methods, guidelines

Coordinators have a crucial role in helping Signatories develop their SEAPs by providing methodological and technical support.

Even though most Coordinators involve their in-house staff for the technical support, external staff is also involved at more than 62%.

As shown before, both often meet within a technical working group set up by the CTC to follow up the initiative. Below is a breakdown of the human resources mobilized.

Percentage of Coordinators having developed specific tools, methods, guidelines to support signatories in their SEAP development

For BEI only	6%
For SEAP only	34%
For both	17%
No	33%
Other	7%

Based on the guidelines issued by the JRC and CoMO, many CTCs have issued their own adaptation of these documents to their local context, and developed tools or supporting documents that might actually ease the work of municipalities - especially small and medium-sized ones. From the answers, here is an overview of what has been developed:

- Own tool to collect data either through **specific Excel spreadsheets** but also **professional tools/software** used or specifically developed (ECOREGION, VITO tool, European energy award, Laks/ARPA Emilia Romagna, climap pratic Ener'GES)
- Excel spreadsheets to estimate energy savings, environmental savings (CO2 avoided), and estimation of the planned investment.
- Produced documents with **different degrees of technical content**, so as to be suitable for the different degrees of knowledge of the municipalities involved.
- **Specific checklists** and tables with the aim of helping the municipal technical staff find and collect information on energy consumption and emissions.
- Based on the analysis of approved SEAPs: a **catalogue of relevant actions** to insert in a SEAP as well as a series of **possible measures for climate change adaptation**.
- Development of a **model SEAP** used as a reference or inspiration for other municipalities in the area.
- Specific guidelines to **develop a Joint SEAP**

Another type of help provided is:

- Developing specific tools relevant to the local context: for example an energy audit for water treatment plants, or tools to analyse local authorities' housing stock.
- Economic Impact Tool (indication of the energy savings, bills savings, cost of measures, as well as an approximation on the number of jobs programmes would develop/sustain).
- Tailor-made assistance, one-to-one meetings to support municipalities

SEAP Monitoring

The Joint Research Centre together with the Covenant of Mayors Office and the group of practitioners (experts from public authorities involved as Covenant Signatories and Coordinators) just published the guidelines that will be used to monitor the SEAP implementation process. In parallel to this process, **25% of respondent Coordinators have taken the initiative to develop their own monitoring system**.

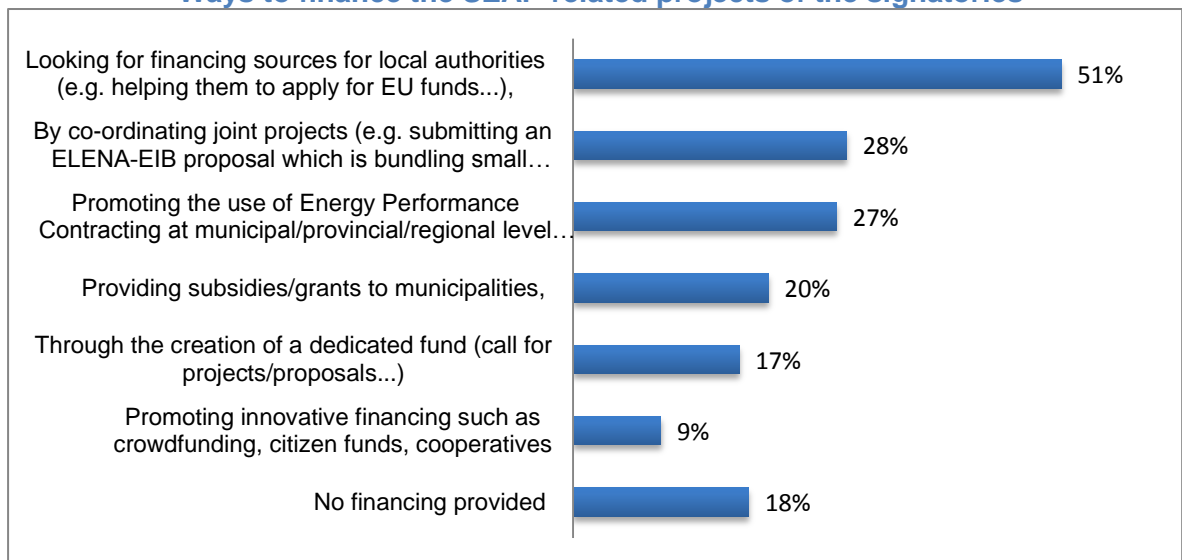
In general, when specific Excel spreadsheets or tools have been used/developed for data collection; the monitoring is foreseen with guidelines to anticipate the work.

In addition, at the regional level, some Energy and GHG emissions Observatories have been created, to help with BEI data collection, SEAP priority areas of intervention, and progress monitoring.

Financing the SEAP Implementation

Financial support for the implementation of SEAPs is paramount and Covenant Coordinators provide it in different ways:

Ways to finance the SEAP-related projects of the signatories



Multiple selection was allowed, so percentages may add up to more than 100%.

Here is a non-exhaustive list of funding opportunities:

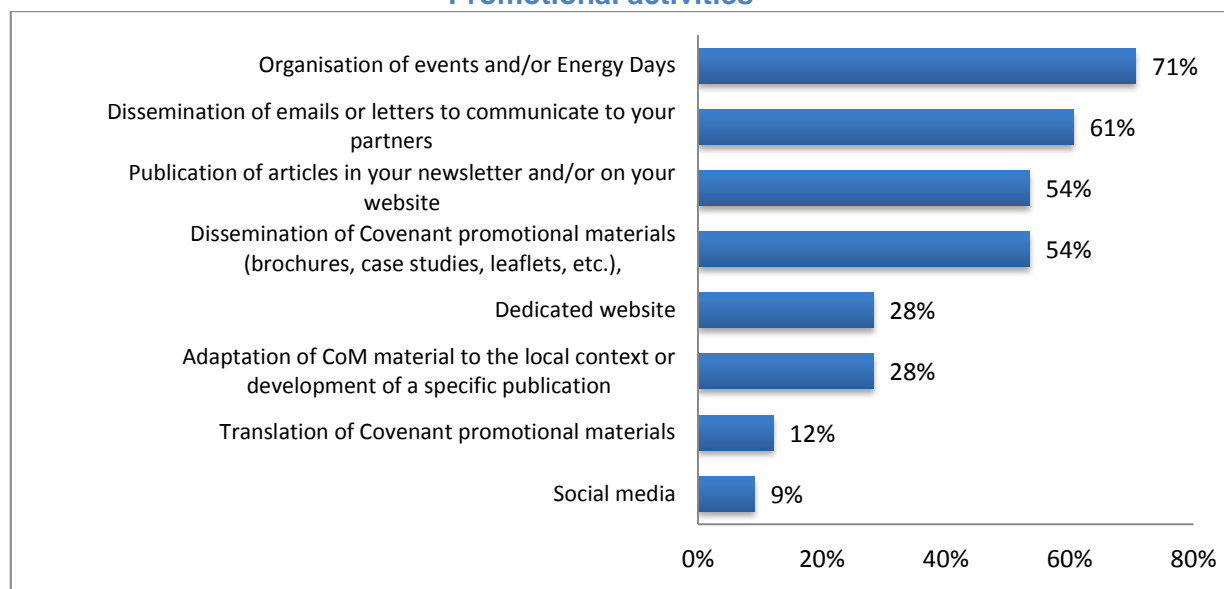
- **ELENA – EIB**
 - o combined with an EIB loan for Photovoltaic plants on public buildings
 - o energy efficiency improvement measures on public lighting systems and public buildings of the province and municipalities.
- **Intelligent Energy Europe projects**
 - o Activities funded by IEE for the province beneficial to municipalities: monitoring activities, energy audits, technical workshops among others.
- **IEE MLEI - PDA**
 - o Energy efficient public lighting, speed up renewable energies and energy efficiency investments, implement innovative ways of financing projects, etc
- **ERDF Funds – 2007-2013**
 - o Financing free energy audits for condominiums in signatory municipalities.
 - o Replicable actions models developed in various municipalities, and collective actions that are financed by the Province and implemented with its technical support.
 - o Financing RES plants and energy efficiency in municipalities
 - o Development of the cycling infrastructure.

- Helping local authorities identify projects in relation to their priorities and integrating them into the regional development programme and the Structural Funds.
 - Integrated projects for urban transport and energy efficiency in buildings
- Use of the **JESSICA facility** for the development of a fund to finance the actions of the SEAP
- **Joint procurement actions in RES Solar**
- **Promotion of EPC / ESCO**
 - Promotion of EPC contracts in municipalities for the energy efficiency improvement of public buildings
 - Public-private partnership through an ESCO model
 - Deep lighting audits to develop good Energy Performance Contracts.
 - Support for identifying energy demands, preparing procurement specifications for hiring these ESCOs and technical evaluation of the specifications.
- **ERDF Funds – 2014-2020**
 - Introducing an award criterion for the funding of actions in the SEAP, in future calls of the POR_FESR 2014-2020.
- **Facilitate access to funding**
 - Information and administrative support to facilitate access of the municipalities to forms of financing available at national / regional level.
 - Technical and legal assistance for bundling projects in a view of reaching the critical mass to be eligible to the ELENA facility for example but also help and guidance to local authorities for European projects-financing and national financing
 - Design of alternative financing schemes and contacting entities that can facilitate the implementation of projects
- **Cooperatives – citizen fund**
Projects looking into the possibilities of cooperatives and citizen funds for RES development.
- But also **promoting energy management in municipalities** through multipliers (info energy point, local energy agencies, ...)

Promotion of the Covenant of Mayors

Coordinators commit to promoting the Covenant to local authorities within their territory and are also encouraged to raise the awareness of other stakeholders to get them on-board.

Promotional activities



Multiple selection was allowed, so percentages may add up to more than 100%.

In general Covenant Territorial Coordinators are **very active** in promoting the initiative as more than **85% of respondents selected 2 or more answers above**. Organising events and disseminating emails or letters are the means of communication most used by respondent Coordinators. Their events have targeted a vast range of actors: info days for municipalities, schools, citizens, energy days, energy caravan, climate festival... Some respondent Coordinators also mentioned meetings with municipalities to promote the initiative or at a later stage, training courses to discuss tools and methods for SEAP development, financing for SEAP implementation...

More than half of the respondents published Covenant-related articles in their newsletters and/or website and disseminated Covenant brochures, case studies, leaflets and so on. Some also ran a communication campaign and produced videos to promote their involvement in the initiative.

More and more organizations are using social media to diversify their communication channels and better reach out to citizens.

Use of the support provided by the Covenant of Mayors Office

Attendance of Coordinators to the events organised by the CoMO

Annual Ceremony (2010, 2011 and/or 2013)	42%
Thematic Workshops organised in Brussels (during EUSEW, Open Days, ...)	36%
Online Webinars (CEB-ELENA, IEE-MLEI, EPC Campaign)...	43%
Not yet but planning to attend one in the future	29%
Other	5%

Multiple selection was allowed, so percentages may add up to more than 100%.

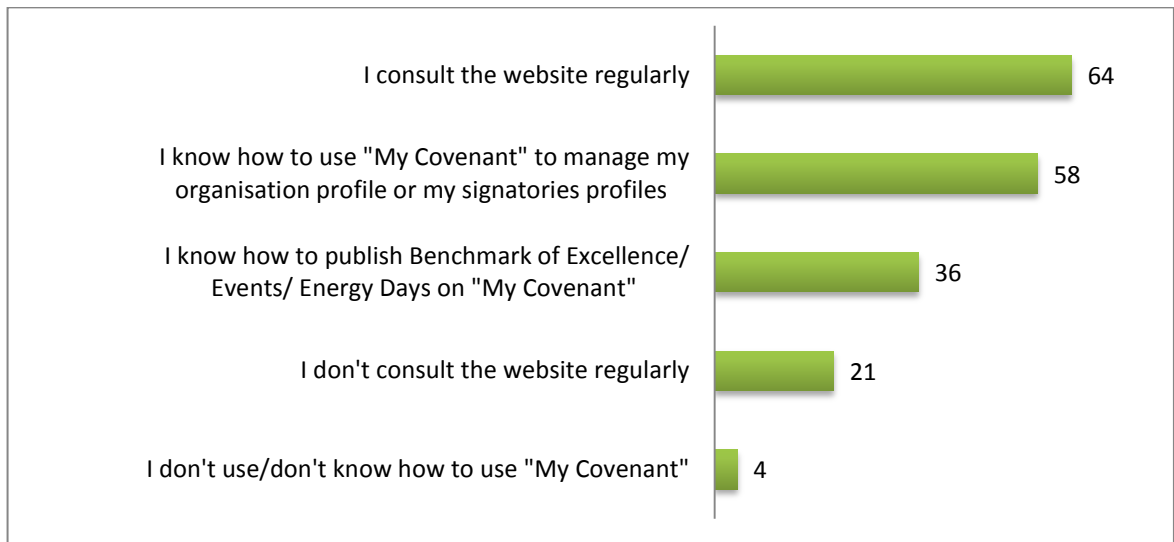
The annual Ceremony, which took place this year on the 24th of June at the European Parliament, is the event most frequently attended.

There was a net increase in the attendance at webinars compared to previous years. The main reason being that in 2013 more webinars were proposed, and the EPC campaign webinars were organized in the national languages and not just in English.

This also means that compared to last year there is a decrease in respondents saying they have never yet participated in an event organized by CoMO.

In addition, as mentioned earlier in this report, a very successful event organized by the Region of Abruzzo, with the support of the CoM Office, was often mentioned. The event took place in May 2013 and was the first national meeting of Covenant Territorial Coordinators in Italy. Some CTCs from other countries were also invited as speakers to share their experiences.

Use of the Covenant Website and Extranet "My Covenant"

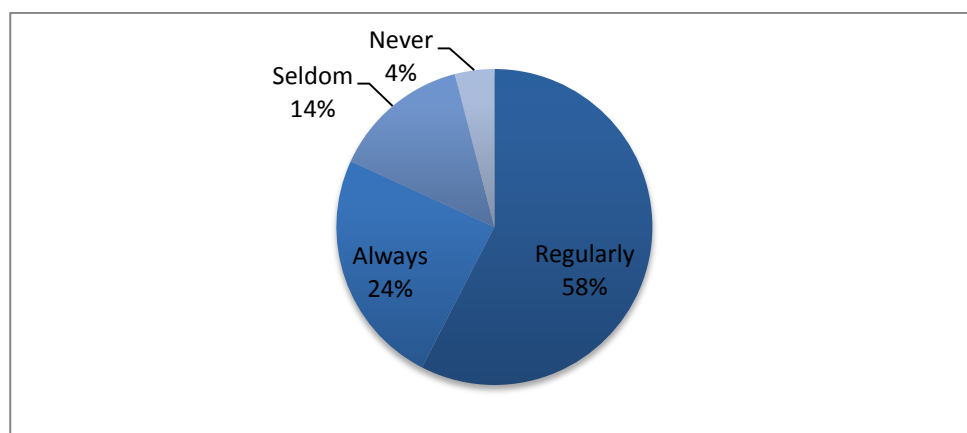


In general the respondents consult the website regularly and know how to use the password-protected area "My covenant".

However only one-third of the respondents know how to publish an event or a Benchmark of Excellence online which means that the CoM Office will send in the coming months a communication to all CTCs to remind and clarify the use of this part of the website.

Reading of the Covenant of Mayors monthly newsletter

82% of the respondent Coordinators read the Covenant monthly newsletter at least regularly.



What can be drawn from the survey?

The Covenant of Mayors can be heralded as a groundbreaking movement, not only because it has fostered the emergence of wide-ranging cooperation platforms at local, regional and European levels, but also because of the substantial boost it has given to multi-level governance in Europe and beyond.

Provinces, regions and other Covenant Coordinators are key to the success of the initiative, notably in terms of:

- the promotion they do of the Covenant in their territory
- increasing the Covenant of Mayors Office capacities by providing decentralised support on the ground and ensuring tailored interaction with thousands of signatories.
- support provided to signatories including technical assistance for example through the organisation of dedicated workshops, or the development of SEAP-related tools and methodologies.
- mobilising other stakeholders - such as energy agencies, private companies and universities - which can bring customized expertise to local authorities.

Signatories' access to funding sources is also facilitated by Coordinators which often act as Managing Authorities of EU Structural Funds and can thus decide to allocate EU funding to Covenant-related activities.

Likewise, Coordinators are the relevant interface to relay Covenant Signatories' funding and legislative priorities to the European Institutions, thus influencing policy development from the bottom-up. Coordinators are asked to comment on the barriers and needs to the European Commission which helps shape the future of the initiative.